

## What to Listen For

### Weather **Watch**:

A Watch is issued when conditions become favorable for severe weather; it does not necessarily mean it is going to happen. Spotter networks are usually activated after a Watch is issued.

### Weather **Warning**:

A Warning is issued when severe weather is occurring or is imminent. Analysis of National Weather Service Doppler radar and spotter reports are used to issue a Warning.

## How to Receive Weather Information

NOAA Weather Radio is the best way to receive forecasts and warnings from the National Weather Service. When storms are in the forecast, a "Hazardous Weather Outlook" is broadcast from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m., with information about possible severe weather.

Severe weather forecasts and warnings are passed to local radio and television stations as well.

The NWS Green Bay web site has many links to forecasts and severe weather watches and warnings:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/grb>

## Spotter Reporting

Some spotter groups have special reporting procedures. Contact your group leader or county emergency manager.

### NWS Green Bay Spotter Hotline:

(unlisted -- restricted to reports only)

Contact [jeff.last@noaa.gov](mailto:jeff.last@noaa.gov) for number

A few days after an event:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/grb/report.html>

## How to Report:

- ☞ **Who** you are
- ☞ **What** you observed
- ☞ **Where** the event occurred:  
Exact location and county
- ☞ **When** the event occurred
- ☞ **Damage** that you witnessed

## What to Report:

- ☞ Tornadoes
- ☞ Funnel clouds
- ☞ Rotating wall clouds
- ☞ Hail (any size)
- ☞ Winds (50 mph or greater)  
Estimated or measured?
- ☞ Flooding
- ☞ Snowfall (3" or greater)
- ☞ Ice accumulation
- ☞ Any weather phenomena causing  
death or serious injury



National Weather Service Green Bay JKL/02-00  
[www.crh.noaa.gov/gb](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/gb)

# Information for Severe Weather Spotters

National Weather Service  
Green Bay, Wisconsin



*For more information contact:*

Jeff Last  
NWS Office  
2485 South Point Road  
Green Bay, WI 54313  
[jeff.last@noaa.gov](mailto:jeff.last@noaa.gov)

## Spotter Tips

Skywarn spotters provide critical information for all hazards in support of the National Weather Service warning program. Spotting for severe local storms can be dangerous and requires considerable skill. If you are not comfortable in any weather situation, immediately seek shelter. Remember:



- Our best spotters practice safety first.
- Most tornadoes move from southwest to northeast. They can also move from the northwest to southeast. The best viewing angle is south of the storm.
- Knowing the movement of the storm is important to report, and is critical to your safety.
- Avoid using “marbles” to describe hail size - use coins, or better yet, measure the hail.
- When reporting wind speeds or gusts, indicate whether they are measured or estimated.
- Tornadoes and rainshafts can look alike. Look for rotation and upward motion. Also look for other visual clues, such as the wall cloud and storm rotation.
- Report accurately: a **tornado** is a violently rotating column of air in contact with the ground; a **funnel cloud** is a violently rotating column of air not reaching the ground. Be observant – sometimes there is no visible connection between the cloud and the ground, even though the tornado is causing debris to be blown about on the ground.
- A **wall cloud** is a lowering of the cloud base below the storm tower, that may or may not rotate.

## Estimating Wind Speed

Most wind damage from thunderstorms is caused by straight-line winds (also known as “downbursts”). When reporting wind speed, remember to include whether the report was measured or estimated, and describe any damage. If you cannot measure the wind speed, use the table below:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 25-30 mph: | large branches move; whistling heard in wires.                             |
| 30-40 mph: | whole trees move.  |
| 40-45 mph: | twigs and small branches break; walking impeded.                           |
| 45-55 mph: | larger branches and weak limbs may break; slight structural damage occurs. |
| 55-65 mph: | moderate structural and tree damage occur.                                 |
| 65 mph + : | heavy to severe structural and tree damage occur.                          |

## Measuring Hail

Use the ruler below to help you measure hail:



## The Supercell Thunderstorm

Supercell thunderstorms are always severe, and can produce tornadoes, large hail, and intense straight-line winds. Knowing the structure of a large thunderstorm will assist you in quickly identifying the active part of the storm.

